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"Restoration" Christian Churches and Their Origins

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> Restorationists: you, mormons, armstrongites,
> millerites, adventists, and other sects whose claim is
> that the original true Gospel was lost or perverted over
> time and that your sect has RESTORED it.

Prior to the appearance of any of these there was yet a different "restorationist" movement whose doctrines were entirely familiar to mainline Protestantism. Each of the above groups has been at odds with the doctrines of the mainline Protestants at one point or another. Of the collection you mentioned above, only the Adventists (and at that, not their predecessors) hold to particularly orthodox positions.

You'll find the original batch of "restoration churches" under the heading of a 'non-denomination' or two such as "_____ Church of Christ" and "_____ Christian Church". BTW, the fellow up in La Porte, in spite of the name being used for his facility, is in no way related to these groups.

Here's a brief summary of the whole concept:

The following is a brief summary of the "Declaration and Address" that was written back in (I believe) 1904. It was the first document that comprehensively issued the plea of the "Restoration Movement". It is the closest thing that exists in the way of a "creed" for the various churches of the Restoration Movement.

The "Restoration Movement" can be traced back to the late 1700's. James O'Kelly, a Methodist in North Carolina, favored an independent, congregational form. Abner Jones (Baptist, 1800-1803 time frame) called for the abandonment of human creeds. J. A. Haidane in Edinburgh, Scotland (1798) had a substantial influence on Campbell (below) and called for the abandonment of "human innovations". Alexander Carson (Tubemore, Ireland, 1807) made a plea for the restoration of New Testament church practice. Barton W. Stone (Presbyterian, Kentucky)

dumped the Calvinist thinking on predestination, and joined Campbell in 1831. Thomas Campbell concluded that "closed communion" was invalid, and was 86'd by his denomination as a result. He and Alexander Campbell authored the "Declaration and Address".

The "Declaration and Address" contained thirteen propositions, summarized below:

1. That the church of Christ is "essentially, intentionally and constitutionally one."
2. That although this unity presupposes and permits the existence of separate congregations or societies, there should be perfect harmony and unity among all of them.
3. That the Bible is the only rule of faith and practice of Christians.
4. That the Old and New Testaments alone contain the authoritative constitution of the church of Christ.
5. That no human authority has power to amend or change the original constitution and laws of the church.
6. That inferences and deductions from the Scriptures, however valuable, can not be made binding upon the consciences of Christians.
7. That differences of opinion with regard to such inferences shall not be made tests of fellowship or communion.
8. That faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God is a sufficient profession to entitle a man or woman to become a member of the church of Christ.
9. That all who have made such a profession, and who manifest their sincerity by their conduct, should love each other as bretheren and as members of the same body and joint-heirs of the same inheritance.
10. That division among Christians is anti-christian, anti-scriptural, unnatural and to be abhorred.
11. That neglect of the revealed will of God and the introduction of human innovations are and have been the causes of all the corruption and divisions that have ever taken place in the church of God.
12. That all that is necessary to secure the highest state of purity and perfection in the church is to restore the original ordinances and constitution as exhibited in the New Testament.

13. That any additions to the New Testament program which circumstances may seem to require, shall be regarded as human expedients and shall not be given a place of higher authority in the church than is permitted by the fallible character of their origin.

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